THE VIEWS

OF

JUDGE WOODWARD AND BISHOP HOPKINS

ON

NEGRO SLAVERY AT THE SOUTH

ILLUSTRATED FROM THE

JOURNAL OF A RESIDENCE ON A GEORGIAN PLANTATION,

BY

MRS. FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE,

(LATE BUTLER.)

A True Picture. A Photographic View of a Badly-whipped Slave.

"The next objection to the Slavery of the Southern States, is its presumed *cruelty*, because the refractory slave is punished with corporeal correction. But our Northern law allows the same in the case of children and apprentices."

"The Saviour himself used a scourge of small cords when he drove the money-changers from the Temple. Are our modern philanthropists more merciful than Christ, and wiser than the Almighty?" — BISHOP HOPKINS.

(*See his Letter on Slavery, published by the Democratic State Central Committee.*)

THE Diary from which the following extracts are taken, was kept in the winter and spring of 1838–9, on an estate consisting of rice and cotton plantations, in the islands at the entrance of the Altamaha, on the coast of Georgia. The narrative is in the form of letters written by Frances Anne Kemble (then Mrs. Butler) to a friend in the North.

The slaves in whom she then had an unfortunate interest, were sold some years ago. The islands themselves are at present in the power of the Northern troops. The record contained in the pages of her Journal is a picture of conditions of human existence which it is hoped and believed have passed away. If these few pages leave any one in doubt as to the moral, social, and political effects of Southern Slavery, he is referred to the Journal itself, as recently published. No argument will reach the man who is not convinced by this "remarkable revelation of the interior life of Slavery."

The following narrative is divided into five chapters, under convenient titles, with head quotations from the extraordinary speech of Judge Woodward, and still more extraordinary letter of Bishop Hopkins, *as published and distributed by the Democratic State Central Committee.* These startling views of the Judge and the Bishop are best met by the record of Southern Slavery *as it is*, from the pen of a *Christian* woman, who had unusual means of observation, and every motive to soften her account of its barbarities.

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NEGRO SLAVERY AT THE SOUTH ILLUSTRATED.

CHAPTER I.

THE MORAL LAW.

"THE third proof that Slavery was authorized by the Almighty occurs in the last of the Ten Commandments, delivered from Mount Sinai, and universally acknowledged by Jews and Christians as '*The Moral Law*,' 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his *man-servant*, *nor his maid-servant*, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.' (Exod. 20 : 17.) Here it is evident that the principle of *property*,—'anything that is thy neighbor's,'—runs through the whole. I am quite aware, indeed, of the prejudice which many good people entertain against the idea of *property* in a human being, and shall consider it in due time amongst the objections. I am equally aware that the wives of our day may take umbrage at the law, which places them in the same sentence with the slave, and even with the house and the cattle. But the truth is none the less certain."—BISHOP HOPKINS'S LETTER, *page* 2.

"Human bondage and property in man is divinely sanctioned, if not ordained."—JUDGE WOODWARD'S SPEECH of DECEMBER 13TH, 1860, *page* 10, *of Edition of Democratic State Central Committee.*

(Extract from MRS. KEMBLE'S Journal.)

THE STORY OF PSYCHE, A SLAVE WOMAN.

MY DEAREST E——:

We have as a sort of under nursemaid and assistant of my dear M——, whose white complexion, as I wrote you, occasioned such indignation to my Southern fellow-travellers, and such extreme perplexity to the poor slaves on our arrival here, a much more orthodox servant for these parts, a young woman named Psyche, but commonly called Sack, not a very graceful abbreviation of the divine heathen appellation. She cannot be much over twenty, has a very pretty figure, a graceful, gentle deportment, and a face which, but for its color (she is a dingy mulatto), would be pretty, and is extremely pleasing, from the perfect sweetness of its expression. She is always serious, not to say sad and silent, and has always

an air of melancholy and timidity, that has frequently struck me very much, and would have made me think some special anxiety or sorrow must occasion it, but that God knows the whole condition of these wretched people naturally produces such a deportment, and there is no necessity to seek for special or peculiar causes to account for it. Just in proportion as I have found the slaves on this plantation intelligent and advanced beyond the general brutish level of the majority, I have observed this pathetic expression of countenance in them, a mixture of sadness and fear, the involuntary exhibition of the two feelings, which I suppose must be the predominant experience of their whole lives, regret and apprehension, not the less heavy, either of them, for being, in some degree, vague and indefinite,—a sense of incalculable past loss and injury, and a dread of incalculable future loss and injury.

I have never questioned Psyche as to her sadness, because in the first place, as I tell you, it appears to me most natural, and is observable in all the slaves whose superior natural or acquired intelligence allows of their filling situations of trust or service about the house and family; and though I cannot and will not refuse to hear any and every tale of suffering which these unfortunates bring to me, I am anxious to spare both myself and them the pain of vain appeals to me for redress and help, which, alas! it is too often utterly out of my power to give them. It is useless, and indeed, worse than useless, that they should see my impotent indignation and unavailing pity, and hear expressions of compassion for them, and horror at their condition, which might only prove incentives to a hopeless resistance on their part to a system, under the hideous weight of whose oppression any individual or partial revolt must be annihilated and ground into the dust. Therefore, as I tell you, I asked Psyche no questions, but to my great astonishment, the other day M—— asked me if I knew to whom Psyche belonged, as the poor woman had inquired of her with much hesitation and anguish, if she could tell her who owned her and her children. She has two nice little children under six years old, whom she keeps as clean and tidy, and who are sad and as silent as herself. My astonishment at this question was, as you will readily believe, not small, and I forthwith sought out Psyche for an explanation. She was thrown into extreme perturbation at finding that her question had been referred to me, and it was some time before I could sufficiently reassure her to be able to comprehend, in the midst of her reiterated entreaties for pardon, and hopes that she had not offended me, that she did not know herself who owned her. She was, at one time, the property of Mr. K——, the former overseer, of whom I have already spoken to you, and who has just been paying Mr. —— a visit. He, like several of his predecessors in the management, has contrived to make a fortune upon it (though it yearly decreases in value to the owners, but this is the inevitable course of things in the South-

ern States), and has purchased a plantation of his own in Alabama, I believe, or one of the Southwestern States. Whether she still belonged to Mr. K—— or not she did not know, and entreated me, if she did, to endeavor to persuade Mr. —— to buy her. Now you must know that this poor woman is the wife of one of Mr. B——'s slaves, a fine, intelligent, active, excellent young man, whose whole family are among some of the very best specimens of character and capacity on the estate. I was so astonished at the (to me) extraordinary state of things revealed by poor Sack's petition, that I could only tell her that I had supposed all the negroes on the plantation were Mr. ——'s property, but that I would certainly inquire, and find out for her, if I could, to whom she belonged, and if I could, endeavor to get Mr. —— to purchase her, if she really was not his.

Now E——, just conceive for one moment the state of mind of this woman, believing herself to belong to a man who in a few days was going down to one of those abhorred and dreaded Southwestern States, and who would then compel her, with her poor little children, to leave her husband and the only home she had ever known, and all the ties of affection, relationship, and association of her former life, to follow him thither, in all human probability never again to behold any living creature that she had seen before; and this was so completely a matter of course that it was not even thought necessary to apprise her positively of the fact, and the only thing that interposed between her and this most miserable fate was the faint hope that Mr. —— *might have* purchased her and her children. But if he had, if this great deliverance had been vouchsafed to her, the knowledge of it was not thought necessary; and with this deadly dread at her heart, she was living day after day, waiting upon me and seeing me, with my husband beside me, and my children in my arms in blessed security, safe from all separation but the one reserved in God's great providence for all his creatures. Do you think I wondered any more at the woe-begone expression of her countenance, or do you think it was easy for me to restrain within prudent and proper limits the expression of my feelings at such a state of things? And she had gone on from day to day enduring this agony, till I suppose its own intolerable pressure and M——'s sweet countenance and gentle sympathizing voice and manner had constrained her to lay down this great burden of sorrow at our feet. I did not see Mr. —— until the evening; but in the meantime meeting Mr. O——, the overseer, with whom, as I believe I have already told you, we are living here, I asked him about Psyche, and who was her proprietor, when, to my infinite surprise, he told me that *he* had bought her and her children from Mr. K——, who had offered them to him, saying that they would be rather troublesome to him than otherwise down where he was going; "and so," said Mr. O——, "as I had no objection to investing a little

money that way, I bought them." With a heart much lightened, I flew to tell poor Psyche the news, so that, at any rate, she might be relieved from the dread of any immediate separation from her husband. You can imagine better than I can tell you what her sensations were; but she still renewed her prayer that I would, if possible, induce Mr. —— to purchase her, and I promised to do so.

Early the next morning, while I was still dressing, I was suddenly startled by hearing voices in loud tones in Mr. ——'s dressing-room, which adjoins my bedroom, and the noise increasing until there was an absolute cry of despair uttered by some man. I could restrain myself no longer, but opened the door of communication and saw Joe, the young man, poor Psyche's husband, raving almost in a state of frenzy, and in a voice broken with sobs and almost inarticulate with passion, reiterating his determination never to leave this plantation, never to go to Alabama, never to leave his old father and mother, his poor wife and children, and dashing his hat, which he was wringing like a cloth in his hands, upon the ground, he declared he would kill himself if he was compelled to follow Mr. K——. I glanced from the poor wretch to Mr. ——, who was standing, leaning against a table with his arms folded, occasionally uttering a few words of counsel to his slave to be quiet and not fret, and not make a fuss about what there was no help for. I retreated immediately from the horrid scene, breathless with surprise and dismay, and stood for some time in my own room, with my heart and temples throbbing to such a degree that I could hardly support myself. As soon as I recovered myself I again sought Mr. O——, and inquired of him if he knew the cause of poor Joe's distress. He then told me that Mr. ——, who is highly pleased with Mr. K——'s past administration of his property, wished, on his departure for his newly-acquired slave plantation, to give him some token of his satisfaction, and *had made him a present* of the man Joe, who had just received the intelligence that he was to go down to Alabama with his new owner the next day, leaving father, mother, wife, and children behind. You will not wonder that the man required a little judicious soothing under such circumstances, and you will also, I hope, admire the humanity of the sale of his wife and children by the owner who was going to take him to Alabama, because *they* would be incumbrances rather than otherwise down there. If Mr. K—— did not do this after he knew that the man was his, then Mr. —— gave him to be carried down to the South after his wife and children were sold to remain in Georgia. I do not know which was the real transaction, for I have not had the heart to ask; but you will easily imagine which of the two cases I prefer believing.

When I saw Mr. —— after this most wretched story became known to me in all its details, I appealed to him, for his own soul's sake, not to commit so great a cruelty. Poor Joe's agony while remonstrating with

his master was hardly greater than mine while arguing with him upon this bitter piece of inhumanity—how I cried, and how I adjured, and how all my sense of justice, and of mercy, and of pity for the poor wretch, and of wretchedness at finding myself implicated in such a state of things, broke in torrents of words from my lips and tears from my eyes! God knows such a sorrow at seeing any one I belonged to commit such an act was indeed a new and terrible experience to me, and it seemed to me that I was imploring Mr. —— to save himself more than to spare these wretches. He gave me no answer whatever, and I have since thought that the intemperate vehemence of my entreaties and expostulations perhaps deserved that he should leave me as he did without one single word of reply; and miserable enough I remained. Toward evening, as I was sitting alone, my children having gone to bed, Mr. O—— came into the room. I had but one subject in my mind; I had not been able to eat for it. I could hardly sit still for the nervous distress which every thought of these poor people filled me with. As he sat down looking over some accounts, I said to him, "Have you seen Joe this afternoon, Mr. O——?" (I give you our conversation as it took place.) "Yes, ma'am; he is a great deal happier than he was this morning." "Why, how is that?" asked I, eagerly. "Oh, he is not going to Alabama. Mr. K—— heard that he had kicked up a fuss about it (being in despair at being torn from one's wife and children is called *kicking up a fuss;* this is a sample of overseer appreciation of human feelings), and said that if the fellow wasn't willing to go with him, he did not wish to be bothered with any niggers down there who were to be troublesome, so he might stay behind." "And does Psyche know this?" "Yes, ma'am, I suppose so." I drew a long breath; and whereas my needle had stumbled through the stuff I was sewing for an hour before, as if my fingers could not guide it, the regularity and rapidity of its evolutions were now quite edifying. The man was for the present safe, and I remained silently pondering his deliverance and the whole proceeding, and the conduct of every one engaged in it, and, above all, Mr. ——'s share in the transaction, and I think, for the first time, almost a sense of horrible personal responsibility and implication took hold of my mind, and I felt the weight of an unimagined guilt upon my conscience; and yet, God knows, this feeling of self-condemnation is very gratuitous on my part, since when I married Mr. —— I knew nothing of these dreadful possessions of his, and even if I had I should have been much puzzled to have formed any idea of the state of things in which I now find myself plunged, together with those whose well-doing is as vital to me almost as my own.

With these agreeable reflections I went to bed. Mr. —— said not a word to me upon the subject of these poor people all the next day, and in the mean time I became very impatient of this reserve on his part, because

I was dying to prefer my request that he would purchase Psyche and her children, and so prevent any future separation between her and her husband, as I supposed he would not again attempt to make a present of Joe, at least to any one who did not wish to be *bothered* with his wife and children. In the evening I was again with Mr. O—— alone in the strange, bare, wooden-walled sort of shanty which is our sitting-room, and revolving in my mind the means of rescuing Psyche from her miserable suspense, a long chain of all my possessions, in the shape of bracelets, necklaces, brooches, earrings, etc., wound in glittering procession through my brain, with many hypothetical calculations of the value of each separate ornament, and the very doubtful probability of the amount of the whole being equal to the price of this poor creature and her children; and then the great power and privilege I had foregone of earning money by my own labor occurred to me, and I think, for the first time in my life, my past profession assumed an aspect that arrested my thoughts most seriously. For the last four years of my life that preceded my marriage I literally coined money, and never until this moment, I think, did I reflect on the great means of good, to myself and others, that I so gladly agreed to give up forever for a maintenance by the unpaid labor of slaves—people toiling not only unpaid, but under the bitter conditions the bare contemplation of which was then wringing my heart. You will not wonder that when, in the midst of such cogitations, I suddenly accosted Mr. O——, it was to this effect: "Mr. O——, I have a particular favor to beg of you. Promise me that you will never sell Psyche and her children without first letting me know of your intention to do so, and giving me the option of buying them." Mr. O—— is a remarkably deliberate man, and squints, so that, when he has taken a little time in directing his eyes to you, you are still unpleasantly unaware of any result in which you are concerned. He laid down a book he was reading, and directed his head and one of his eyes toward me and answered, "Dear me, ma'am, I am very sorry—I have sold them." My work fell down on the ground, and my mouth opened wide, but I could utter no sound, I was so dismayed and surprised; and he deliberately proceeded: "I didn't know, ma'am, you see, at all, that you entertained any idea of making an investment of that nature; for I'm sure, if I had, I would willingly have sold the woman to you; but I sold her and her children this morning to Mr.——." My dear E——, though ——had resented my unmeasured upbraidings, you see they had not been without some good effect, and though he had, perhaps justly, punished my violent outbreak of indignation about the miserable scene I had witnessed by not telling me of his humane purpose, he had bought these poor creatures, and so, I trust, secured them from any such misery in future. I jumped up and left Mr. O—— still speaking, and ran to find Mr. ——, to thank him for what he had done, and with that will now bid you good-

by. Think, E——, how it fares with slaves on plantations where there is no crazy Englishwoman to weep, and entreat, and implore, and upbraid for them, and no master willing to listen to such appeals.

CHAPTER II.

THE GOLDEN RULE.

"Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."—MATTHEW 7 : 12.

"We consign them (the slaves) to no heathen thrall, but to Christian men, professing the same faith with us, speaking the same language, *reading the golden rule, in no one-sided and distorted shape*, but as it is recorded—a rule to slaves, as well as to masters."—JUDGE WOODWARD'S SPEECH OF DECEMBER 13TH, 1860, *page* 10, *Democratic Edition*.

"It is said by some, however, that the great principle of the Gospel, love to God and love to man, necessarily involved the condemnation of Slavery. Yet how should it have any such result, when we remember that this was no new principle, but, on the contrary, was laid down by the Deity to his own chosen people, and was quoted from the Old Testament by the Savior himself? and why should Slavery be thought inconsistent with it? In the relation of master and slave, we are assured by our Southern brethren that there is incomparably more mutual love than ever can be found between the employer and the hireling."—BISHOP HOPKINS'S LETTER, *page* 4, *Democratic Edition*.

Slavery never appeared so hateful, nor slaveholders so vulgar and brutal, as in the following extracts, where a woman tells the world what the black women of the South have so long endured.

(Extracts from MRS. KEMBLE'S Journal.)

DEAR E——:

Before closing this letter, I have a mind to transcribe to you the entries for to-day recorded in a sort of day-book, where I put down very succinctly the number of people who visit me, their petitions and ailments, and also such special particulars concerning them as seem to me worth recording. You will see how miserable the physical condition of

many of these poor creatures is; and their physical condition, it is insisted by those who uphold this evil system, is the only part of it which is prosperous, happy, and compares well with that of Northern laborers. Judge from the details I now send you; and never forget, while reading them, that the people on this plantation are well off, and consider themselves well off, in comparison with the slaves on some of the neighboring estates.

Fanny has had six children; all dead but one. She came to beg to have her work in the field lightened.

Nanny has had three children; two of them are dead. She came to implore that the rule of sending them into the field three weeks after their confinement might be altered.

Leah, Cæsar's wife has had six children; three are dead.

Sophy, Lewis's wife, came to beg for some old linen. She is suffering fearfully; has had ten children; five of them are dead. The principal favor she asked was a piece of meat, which I gave her.

Sally, Scipio's wife has had two miscarriages and three children born, one of whom is dead. She came complaining of incessant pain and weakness in her back. This woman was a mulatto daughter of a slave called Sophy, by a white man of the name of Walker, who visited the plantation.

Charlotte, Renty's wife, had had two miscarriages, and was with child again. She was almost crippled with rheumatism, and showed me a pair of poor swollen knees that made my heart ache. I have promised her a pair of flannel trowsers, which I must forthwith set about making.

Sarah, Stephen's wife—this woman's case and history were alike deplorable. She had had four miscarriages, had brought seven children into the world, five of whom were dead, and was again with child. She complained of dreadful pains in the back, and an internal tumor which swells with the exertion of working in the fields; probably, I think, she is ruptured. She told me she had once been mad and had ran into the woods, where she contrived to elude discovery for some time, but was at last tracked and brought back, when she was tied up by the arms, and heavy logs fastened to her feet, and was severely flogged. After this she contrived to escape again, and lived for some time skulking in the woods, and she supposes mad, for when she was taken again she was entirely naked. She subsequently recovered from this derangement, and seems now just like all the other poor creatures who come to me for help and pity. I suppose her constant childbearing and hard labor in the fields at the same time may have produced the temporary insanity.

Sukey, Bush's wife, only came to pay her respects. She had had four miscarriages; had brought eleven children into the world, five of whom are dead.

Molly, Quambo's wife, also only came to see me. Hers was the best

account I have yet received; she had had nine children, and six of them were still alive.

This is only the entry for to-day, in my diary, of the people's complaints and visits. Can you conceive a more wretched picture than that which it exhibits of the conditions under which these women live? Their cases are in no respect singular, and though they come with pitiful entreaties that I will help them with some alleviation of their pressing physical distresses it seems to me marvellous with what desperate patience (I write it advisedly), patience of utter despair, they endure their sorrow-laden existence. Even the poor wretch who told that miserable story of insanity, and lonely hidings in the swamp, and scourging when she was found, and of her renewed madness and flight, did so in a sort of low plaintive monotonous murmur of misery, as if such sufferings were "all in the day's work."

I ask these questions about their children, because I think the number they bear as compared with the number they rear a fair gauge of the effect of the system on their own health and that of their offspring. There was hardly one of these women, as you will see by the details I have noted of their ailments, who might not have been a candidate for a bed in a hospital, and they had come to me after working all day in the fields.

Dear E——:

This morning I paid my second visit to the Infirmary, and found there had been some faint attempt at sweeping and cleaning, in compliance with my entreaties. The poor woman Harriet, however, whose statement with regard to the impossibility of their attending properly to their children had been so vehemently denied by the overseer, was crying bitterly. I asked her what ailed her, when, more by signs and dumbshow than words, she and old Rose informed me that Mr. O—— had flogged her that morning for having told me that the women had not time to keep their children clean. It is part of the regular duty of every overseer to visit the Infirmary at least once a day, which he generally does in the morning, and Mr. O——'s visit had preceded mine but a short time only, or I might have been edified by seeing a man horsewhip a woman. I again and again made her repeat her story, and she again and again affirmed that she had been flogged for what she told me, none of the whole company in the room denying it or contradicting her. I left the room, because I was so disgusted and indignant that I could hardly restrain my feelings, and to express them could have produced no single good result.

Mr. —— was called out this evening to listen to a complaint of overwork from a gang of pregnant women. I did not stay to listen to the details of their petition, for I am unable to command myself on such occasions, and Mr. —— seemed positively degraded in my eyes as he stood

enforcing upon these women the necessity of their fulfilling their appointed tasks. How honorable he would have appeared to me begrimed with the sweat and toil of the coarsest manual labor, to what he then seemed, setting forth to these wretched, ignorant women, as a duty, their unpaid exacted labor! I turned away in bitter disgust. I hope this sojourn among Mr. ——'s slaves may not lessen my respect for him, but I fear it; for the details of slaveholding are so unmanly, letting alone every other consideration, that I know not how any one with the spirit of a man can condescend to them.

This morning I had a visit from two of the women, Charlotte and Judy, who came to me for help and advice for a complaint, which it really seems to me every other woman on the estate is cursed with, and which is a direct result of the conditions of their existence. The practice of sending women to labor in the fields in the third week after their confinement is a specific for causing this infirmity, and I know no specific for curing it under these circumstances. As soon as these poor things had departed with such comfort as I could give them, and the bandages they especially begged for, three other sable graces introduced themselves, Edie, Louisa, and Diana; the former told me she had had a family of seven children, but had lost them all through "ill luck," as she denominated the ignorance and ill treatment which were answerable for the loss of these, as of so many other poor little creatures, their fellows. Having dismissed her and Diana with the sugar and rice they came to beg, I detained Louisa, whom I had never seen but in the presence of her old grandmother, whose version of the poor child's escape to, and hiding in the woods, I had a desire to compare with the heroine's own story. She told it very simply, and it was most pathetic. She had not finished her task one day, when she said she felt ill, and unable to do so, and had been severely flogged by Driver Bran, in whose "gang" she then was. The next day, in spite of this encouragement to labor, she had again been unable to complete her appointed work; and Bran having told her that he'd tie her up and flog her if she did not get it done, she had left the field and run into the swamp. "Tie you up, Louisa!" said I; "what is that?" She then described to me that they were fastened up by their wrists to a beam or a branch of a tree, their feet barely touching the ground, so as to allow them no purchase for resistance or evasion of the lash, their clothes turned over their heads, and their backs scored with a leather thong, either by the driver himself, or, if he pleases to inflict their punishment by deputy, any of the men he may choose to summon to the office; it might be father, brother, husband, or lover, if the overseer so ordered it. I turned sick, and my blood curdled listening to these details from the slender young slip of a lassie, with her poor piteous face and murmuring, pleading voice. "Oh," said I, "Louisa; but the rattlesnakes—the dreadful rattlesnakes in the swamps; were you

not afraid of those horrible creatures?" "Oh, missis," said the poor child, "me no tink of dem; me forget all 'bout dem for de fretting." "Why did you come home at last?" "Oh, missis, me starve with hunger, me most dead with hunger before me come back." "And were you flogged, Louisa?" said I, with a shudder at what the answer might be. "No, missis, me go to hospital; me almost dead and sick so long, 'spec Driver Bran him forgot 'bout de flogging." I am getting perfectly savage over all these doings, E——, and really think I should consider my own throat and those of my children well cut if some night the people were to take it into their heads to clear off scores in that fashion.

Returning from the hospital, I was accosted by poor old Teresa, the wretched negress who had complained to me so grievously of her back being broken by hard work and childbearing. She was in a dreadful state of excitement, which she partly presently communicated to me, because she said Mr. O—— had ordered her to be flogged for having complained to me as she did. It seems to me that I have come down here to be tortured, for this punishing these wretched creatures for crying out to me for help is really converting me into a source of increased misery to them. It is almost more than I can endure to hear these horrid stories of lashings inflicted because I have been invoked; and though I dare say Mr. ——, thanks to my passionate appeals to him, gives me little credit for prudence or self-command, I have some, and I exercise it, too, when I listen to such tales as these with my teeth set fast and my lips closed. Whatever I may do to the master, I hold my tongue to the slaves, and I wonder how I do it.

On my return to our own island, I visited another of the hospitals, and the settlements to which it belonged. The condition of these places and of their inhabitants is, of course, the same all over the plantation, and if I were to describe them I should but weary you with a repetition of identical phenomena; filthy, wretched, almost naked, always barelegged and barefooted children; negligent, ignorant, wretched mothers, whose apparent indifference to the plight of their offspring, and utter incapacity to alter it, are the inevitable result of their slavery. It is hopeless to attempt to reform their habits or improve their condition while the women are condemned to field labor; nor is it possible to over-estimate the bad moral effect of the system as regards the women entailing this enforced separation from their children, and neglect of all the cares and duties of mother, nurse, and even housewife, which are all merged in the mere physical toil of a human hoeing machine. It seems to me too—but upon this point I can not, of course, judge as well as the persons accustomed to and acquainted with the physical capacities of their slaves—that the labor is not judiciously distributed in many cases—at least not as far as the women are concerned. It is true that every able-bodied woman is made the most

of, in being driven afield as long as, under all and any circumstances, she is able to wield a hoe; but, on the other hand, stout, hale, hearty girls and boys, of from eight to twelve, and older, are allowed to lounge about, filthy and idle, with no pretence of an occupation but what they call "tend baby," *i. e.*, see to the life and limbs of the little slave infants, to whose mothers, working in distant fields, they carry them during the day to be suckled, and for the rest of the time leave them to crawl and kick in the filthy cabins or on the broiling sand which surrounds them, in which industry, excellent enough for the poor babies, these big lazy youths and lasses emulate them. Again, I find many women who have borne from five to ten children, rated as workers, precisely as young women in the prime of their strength who have had none; this seems a cruel carelessness. To be sure, while the women are pregnant their task is diminished, and this is one of the many indirect inducements held out to reckless propagation, which has a sort of premium offered to it in the consideration of less work and more food, counterbalanced by none of the sacred responsibilities which hallow and ennoble the relation of parent and child; in short, as their lives are for the most part those of mere animals, their increase is literally mere animal breeding, to which every encouragement is given, for it adds to the master's live-stock and the value of his estate.

CHAPTER III.

AN INCALCULABLE BLESSING.

"Here we see that *the separation of husband and wife is positively directed by the divine command, in order to secure the property of the master in his bond-maid and her offspring.*

"With this law before his eyes, what Christian can believe that the Almighty attached immorality or sin to the condition of slavery?"—BISHOP HOPKINS'S LETTER, *page* 3, *Democratic Committee's Edition.*

"Negro slavery has been an incalculable blessing to us."—JUDGE WOODWARD'S SPEECH, *page* 9, *Democratic Committee's Edition.*

Judge of this "*incalculable blessing*" as it appears in the following plain every-day record of facts, as they exhibit the woes, horrors, and crimes of Slavery!

(Extract from MRS. KEMBLE'S Journal.)

In a conversation with old "House Molly," as she is called, to distinguish her from all other Mollies on the estate, she having had the honor

of being a servant in Major ——'s house for many years, I asked her if the relation between men and women who are what they call married, *i. e.*, who have agreed to live together as man and wife (the only species of marriage formerly allowed on the estate, I believe now London may read the Marriage Service to them), was considered binding by the people themselves and by the overseer. She said "not much formerly," and that the people couldn't be expected to have much regard to such an engagement, utterly ignored as it was by Mr. K——, whose invariable rule, if he heard of any disagreement between a man and woman calling themselves married, was immediately to bestow them in "marriage" on other parties, whether they chose it or not, by which summary process the slightest "incompatibility of temper" received the relief of a divorce more rapid and easy than even Germany could afford, and the estate lost nothing by any prolongation of celibacy on either side. Of course, the misery consequent upon such arbitrary destruction of voluntary and imposition of involuntary ties was nothing to Mr. K——.

I was very sorry to hear to-day that Mr. O——, the overseer at the rice-island, of whom I have made mention to you more than once in my letters, *had had one of the men flogged very severely for getting his wife baptized.* I was quite unable, from the account I received, to understand what his objection had been to the poor man's desire to make his wife at least a formal Christian; but it does seem dreadful that such an act should be so visited. I almost wish I was back again at the rice-island; for, though this is every way the pleasanter residence, I hear so much more that is intolerable of the treatment of the slaves from those I find here, that my life is really made wretched by it. There is not a single natural right that is not taken away from these unfortunate people, and the worst of all is, that their condition does not appear to me, upon farther observation of it, to be susceptible of even partial alleviation as long as the fundamental evil, the slavery itself, remains.

The women who visited me yesterday evening were all in the family way, and came to entreat of me to have the sentence (what else can I call it?) modified, which condemns them to resume their labor of hoeing in the fields three weeks after their confinement. They knew, of course, that I cannot interfere with their appointed labor, and therefore their sole entreaty was that I would use my influence with Mr. —— to obtain for them a month's respite from labor in the field after childbearing. Their principal spokeswoman, a woman with a bright sweet face, called Mary, and a very sweet voice, which is by no means an uncommon excellence among them, appealed to my own experience; and while she spoke of my babies, and my carefully tended, delicately nursed, and tenderly watched confinement and convalescence, and implored me to have a kind of labor given to them less exhausting during the month after their confinement, I

held the table before me so hard in order not to cry, that I think my fingers ought to have left a mark on it. At length I told them that Mr. —— had forbidden me to bring him any more complaints from them, for that he thought the ease with which I received and believed their stories only tended to make them discontented, and that, therefore, I feared I could not promise to take their petitions to him; but that he would be coming down to "the Point" soon, and that they had better come then some time when I was with him, and say what they had just been saying to me; and with this and various small bounties, I was forced, with a heavy heart, to dismiss them; and when they were gone, with many exclamations of "Oh yes, missis, you will, you will speak to massa for we; God bless you, missis, we sure you will!" I had my cry out for them, for myself, for us. All these women had had large families, and *all* of them had lost half their children, and several of them had lost more. How I do ponder upon the strange fate which has brought me here, from so far away, from surroundings so curiously different. How my own people in that blessed England of my birth would marvel if they could suddenly have a vision of me as I sit here, and how sorry some of them would be for me!

After I had been in the house a little while, I was summoned out again to receive the petition of certain poor women in the family-way to have their work lightened. I was, of course, obliged to tell them that I could not interfere in the matter; that their master was away, and that when he came back, they must present their request to him: they said they had already begged, "massa," and he had refused, and they thought, perhaps, if "missis" begged "massa" for them, he would lighten their task. Poor "missis," poor "massa," poor woman, that I am to have such prayers addressed to me! I had to tell them that if they had already spoken to their master, I was afraid my doing so would be of no use, but that when he came back I would try; so choking with crying, I turned away from them, and re-entered the house, to the chorus of "Oh! thank you, missis! God bless you, missis!" E——, I think an improvement might be made upon that caricature published a short time ago, called the "Chivalry of the South." I think an elegant young Carolinian or Georgian gentleman, whip in hand, driving a gang of "lusty women," as they are called here, would be a pretty version of the "Chivalry of the South,"—a little coarse, I am afraid you will say. Oh! quite horribly coarse, but then so true,—a great matter in works of art, which nowadays appear to be thought excellent only in proportion to their lack of ideal elevation. That would be a subject, and a treatment of it, which could not be accused of imaginative exaggeration at any rate.

After my return home, I had my usual evening reception, and among

other pleasant incidents of plantation life, heard the following agreeable anecdote from a woman named Sophy, who came to beg for some rice. In asking her about her husband and children, she said she had never had any husband; that she had had two children by a white man of the name of Walker, who was employed at the mill on the rice-island. She was in the hospital after the birth of the second child she bore this man, and at the same time two women, Judy and Sylla, of whose children Mr. K—— was the father, were recovering from their confinements. It was not a month since any of them had been delivered, when Mrs. K—— came to the hospital, had them all three severely flogged, a process which *she* personally superintended, and then sent them to Five Pound,—the swamp Botany Bay of the plantation, of which I have told you,—with farther orders to the drivers to flog them every day for a week. Now, E——, if I make you sick with these disgusting stories, I cannot help it; they are the life itself here. Hitherto I have thought these details intolerable enough, but this apparition of a female fiend in the middle of this hell I confess adds an element of cruelty which seems to me to surpass all the rest. Jealousy is not an uncommon quality in the feminine temperament, and just conceive the fate of these unfortunate women between the passions of their masters and mistresses, each alike armed with power to oppress and torture them. Sophy went on to say that Isaac was her son by Driver Morris, who had forced her while she was in her miserable exile at Five Pound. Almost beyond my patience with this string of detestable details, I exclaimed,—foolishly enough, heaven knows,—"Ah! but don't you know,—did nobody ever tell or teach any of you that it is a sin to live with men who are not your husbands?" Alas! E——, what could the poor creature answer but what she did, seizing me at the same time vehemently by the wrist: "Oh yes, missis, we know; we know all about that well enough; but we do anything to get our poor flesh some rest from de whip. When he made me follow him into de bush, what use me tell him no? he have strength to make me." I have written down the woman's words; I wish I could write down the voice and look of abject misery with which they were spoken. Now you will observe that the story was not told to me as a complaint; it was a thing long past and over, of which she only spoke in the natural course of accounting for her children to me. I make no comment; what need, or can I add to such stories? But how is such a state of things to endure? and again, how is it to end? While I was pondering, as it seemed to me, at the very bottom of the Slough of Despond, on this miserable creature's story, another woman came in (Tema), carrying in her arms a child the image of the mulatto Bran; she came to beg for flannel. I asked her who was her husband. She said she was not married. Her child is the child of Bricklayer Temple, who has a wife at the rice-island. By this time, what do you think of the moralities, as well

as the amenities of slave life? These are the conditions which can only be known to one who lives among them; flagrant acts of cruelty may be rare, but this ineffable state of utter degradation, this really *beastly* existence, is the normal condition of these men and women, and of that no one seems to take heed, nor have I ever heard it described, so as to form any adequate conception of it, till I found myself plunged into it. Where and how is one to begin the cleansing of this horrid pestilential immondezzio of an existence?

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

"For liberty, equality, and fraternity, we have deliberately substituted *slavery, subordination, and government.*"—Richmond Examiner, May 30, 1863.

"First on the list stand the propositions of the far-famed Declaration of Independence, 'that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' These statements are here called 'self-evident truths;' but with due respect to the celebrated names which are appended to this document, I have never been able to comprehend that they are 'truths' at all."—Bishop Hopkins's Letter, *page* 7.

"I have been, I fear, unreasonably tedious in thus endeavoring to show why I utterly discard these famous propositions of the Declaration of Independence. It is because I am aware of the strong hold which they have gained over the ordinary mind of the nation. They are assumed by thousands upon thousands, as if they were the very doctrines of Divine truth, and they are made the basis of the hostile feeling against the Slavery of the South, *notwithstanding their total want of rationality.*"—Bishop Hopkins's Letter, *page* 9.

"I am utterly opposed to those popular propositions (of the Declaration of Independence), not only because I hold them to be altogether fallacious and untrue, for the reason already given, but further, because their *tendency* is in direct contrariety to the precepts of the Gospel, and the highest interests of the individual man;

for what is the unavoidable effect of this doctrine of human equality? Is it not to nourish the spirit of pride, envy, and contention? To set the servant against the master, the poor against the rich, the weak against the strong, the ignorant against the educated? To loosen all the bonds and relations of society, and reduce the whole duty of subordination to the selfish cupidity of pecuniary interest, without an atom of respect for age, for office, for law, for government, for Providence, or for the word of God?"—BISHOP HOPKINS'S LETTER, *page* 10.

"The fifth objection which often meets the Northern ear, proceeds from the overweening value attached in our age and country to the name of liberty, since it is common to call it the dearest right of man, and to esteem its loss as the greatest possible calamity; hence, we frequently find persons who imagine that the whole argument is triumphantly settled by the question, '*How would you like to be a slave?*' This is a 'very puerile interrogatory.'"—BISHOP HOPKINS'S LETTER, *page* 13.

The above quotations are from a document issued by the State Central Committee of the Democratic Party! If *Slavery*, and not *Freedom*, is to be the corner-stone of our Republican Government, let the following account of the *poor whites* of the South, show what such doctrines lead to!

(Extract from Journal of MRS. KEMBLE.)

On our drive we passed occasionally a tattered man or woman, whose yellow mud complexion, straight features and singularly sinister countenance bespoke an entirely different race from the negro population in the midst of which they lived. These are the so-called Pine-landers of Georgia, I suppose the most degraded race of human beings claiming an Anglo-Saxon origin that can be found on the face of the earth—filthy, lazy, ignorant, brutal, proud, penniless savages, without one of the nobler attributes which have been occasionally found allied to the vices of savage nature. They own no slaves, for they are almost without exception abjectly poor; they will not work, for that, as they conceive, would reduce them to an equality with the abhorred negroes; they squat, and steal, and starve, on the outskirts of this lowest of all civilized societies, and their countenances bear witness to the squalor of their condition, and the utter degradation of their natures. To the crime of Slavery, though they have no profitable part or lot in it, they are fiercely accessory, because it is the barrier which divides the black and white races, at the foot of which they lie wallowing in unspeakable degradation, but immensely proud of

the base freedom that still separates them from the lash-driven tillers of the soil.*

After dinner I had a most interesting conversation with Mr. K——. Among other subjects he gave me a lively and curious description of the yeomanry of Georgia, more properly termed Pine-landers. Have you visions now of well-to-do farmers with comfortable homesteads, decent habits, industrious, intelligent, cheerful and thrifty? Such, however, is not the yeomanry of Georgia. Labor being here the especial portion of slaves, it is thenceforth degraded, and considered unworthy of all but slaves. No white man, therefore, of any class puts hand to work of any kind soever. This is an exceedingly dignified way of proving their gentility for the lazy planters who prefer an idle life of semi-starvation and barbarism to the degradation of doing anything themselves; but the effect on the poorer whites of the country is terrible. I speak now of the scattered white population, who, too poor to possess land or slaves, and having no means of living in the towns, squat (most appropriately is it so termed) either on other men's land or government districts—always here swamp or pine barren—and claim masterdom over the place they invade, till ejected by the rightful proprietors. These wretched creatures will not, for they are whites (and labor belongs to blacks and slaves alone here), labor for their own subsistence. They are hardly protected from the weather by the rude shelters they frame for themselves in the midst of these dreary woods. Their food is chiefly supplied by shooting the wild-fowl and venison, and stealing from the cultivated patches of the plantations nearest at hand. Their clothes hang about them in filthy tatters, and the combined squalor and fierceness of their appearance is really frightful.

This population is the direct growth of slavery. The planters are loud

* Of such is the white family so wonderfully described in Mrs. Stowe's "Dred," whose only slave brings up the orphaned children of his masters with such exquisitely grotesque and pathetic tenderness. From such the conscription which has fed the Southern army in the deplorable civil conflict now raging in America has drawn its rank and file. Better "food for powder" the world could scarcely supply. Fierce and idle, with hardly one of the necessities or amenities that belong to civilized existence, they are hardy endurers of hardship, and reckless to a savage degree of the value of life, whether their own or others. The soldiers' pay, received or promised, exceeds in amount per month anything they ever earned before per year, and the war they wage is one that enlists all their proud and ferocious instincts. It is against the Yankees—the Northern sons of free soil, free toil and intelligence, the hated Abolitionists, whose success would sweep away slavery and reduce the Southern white men to work—no wonder they are ready to fight to the death against this detestable alternative, especially as they look to victory as the certain promotion of the refuse of the "poor white" population of the South, of which they are now all members, to the coveted dignity of slaveholders.

in their execrations of these miserable vagabonds; yet they do not see that so long as labor is considered the disgraceful portion of slaves, these free men will hold it nobler to starve or steal than till the earth, with none but the despised blacks for fellow-laborers. The blacks themselves—such is the infinite power of custom—acquiesce in this notion, and, as I have told you, consider it the lowest degradation in a white to use any exertion. I wonder, considering the burdens they have seen me lift, the digging, the planting, the rowing, and the walking I do, that they do not utterly contemn me, and indeed they seem lost in amazement at it.

Talking of these Pine-landers—gipsies, without any of the romantic associations that belong to the latter people—led us to the origin of such a population, Slavery; and you may be sure I listened with infinite interest to the opinions of a man of uncommon shrewdness and sagacity, who was born in the very bosom of it, and has passed his whole life among slaves. If any one is competent to judge of its effects, such a man is the one; and this was his verdict: "I hate Slavery with all my heart; I consider it an absolute curse wherever it exists. It will keep those States where it does exist fifty years behind the others in improvement and prosperity." Farther on in the conversation he made this most remarkable observation: "As for its being an irremediable evil—a thing not to be helped or got rid of—that's all nonsense; for, as soon as people become convinced that it is their interest get rid of it, they will find soon the means to do so, depend upon it. And undoubtedly this is true. This is not an age, nor yours a country, where a large mass of people will long endure what they perceive to be injurious to their fortunes and advancement. Blind as people often are to their highest and truest interests, your country folk have generally shown remarkable acuteness in finding out where their worldly progress suffered let or hindrance, and have removed it with laudable alacrity. Now the fact is not at all as we at the North are sometimes told, that the Southern slaveholders deprecate the evils of slavery quite as much as we do; that they see all its miseries; that, moreover, they are most anxious to get rid of the whole thing, but want the means to do so, and submit most unwillingly to a necessity from which they cannot extricate themselves. All this I thought might be true before I went to the South, and often has the charitable supposition checked the condemnation which was indignantly rising to my lips against these murderers of their brethren's peace.

Dearest E——:

Passing the rice-mill this morning in my walk, I went in to look at the machinery, the large steam mortars which shell the rice, and which work under the intelligent and reliable supervision of Engineer Ned.

I was much surprised, in the course of conversation with him this morning, to find how much older a man he was than he appeared. Indeed, his youthful appearance had hitherto puzzled me much in accounting for his very superior intelligence and the important duties confided to him. He is, however, a man upward of forty years old, although he looks ten years younger. He attributed his own uncommonly youthful appearance to the fact of his never having done what he called field-work, or been exposed, as the common gang negroes are, to the hardships of their all but brutish existence. He said his former master had brought him up very kindly, and he had learned to tend the engines, and had never been put to any other work, but he said this was not the case with his poor wife. He wished she was as well off as he was, but she had to work in the rice-fields, and was "most broke in two" with labor, and exposure, and hard work while with child, and hard work just directly after childbearing; he said she could hardly crawl, and he urged me very much to speak a kind word for her to massa. She was almost all the time in hospital, and he thought she could not live long.

Now, E——, here is another instance of the horrible injustice of this system of slavery. In my country or in yours, a man endowed with sufficient knowledge and capacity to be an engineer would, of course, be in the receipt of considerable wages; his wife would, together with himself, reap the advantages of his ability, and share the well-being his labor earned; he would be able to procure for her comfort in sickness or in health, and beyond the necessary household work, which the wives of most artisans are inured to, she would have no labor to encounter; in case of sickness even these would be alleviated by the assistance of some stout girl of all work or kindly neighbor, and the tidy parlor or snug bedroom would be her retreat if unequal to the daily duties of her own kitchen. Think of such a lot compared with that of the head engineer of Mr. ——'s plantation, whose sole wages are his coarse food and raiment and miserable hovel, and whose wife, covered with one filthy garment of ragged texture and dingy color, barefooted and bareheaded, is daily driven afield to labor with aching pain-racked joints, under the lash of a driver, or lies languishing on the earthen floor of the dismal plantation hospital in a condition of utter physical destitution and degradation such as the most miserable dwelling of the poorest inhabitant of your free Northern villages never beheld the like of. Think of the rows of tidy tiny houses in the long suburbs of Boston and Philadelphia, inhabited by artisans of just the same grade as this poor Ned, with their white doors and steps, their hydrants of inexhaustible fresh flowing water, the innumerable appliances for decent comfort of their cheerful rooms, the gay wardrobe of the wife, her cotton prints for daily use, her silk for Sunday church-going; the careful comfort of the children's clothing, the books and newspapers in the little parlor, the daily district

school, the weekly parish church: imagine if you can—but you are happy that you can not—the contrast between such an existence and that of the best mechanic on a Southern plantation.

CHAPTER V.

THE CORNER-STONE OF SOUTHERN SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT.

"The slavery of the negro race, *as maintained in the Southern States*, appears to me fully authorized both in the Old and the New Testament, which, as the written word of God, afford the only infallible standard of moral rights and obligations."—BISHOP HOPKINS'S LETTER, *page* 16, *Democratic Committee's Edition.*

"In all the sayings of our Saviour, we hear no injunction for the suppression of a slavery which existed under His eyes; while He delivered many maxims and precepts which, like the golden rule, enter right into and regulate the relation."—JUDGE WOODWARD'S SPEECH, DEC. 13th, 1860, *page* 10.

What a blasphemous use of the Word of God, to use it as an excuse, palliation, and even Divine sanction, for the horrible system, laid bare and quivering, in the following extracts!

(Extract from Journal of MRS. KEMBLE.)

On my return from the river I had a long and painful conversation with Mr.—— upon the subject of the flogging which had been inflicted on the wretched Teresa. These discussions are terrible: they throw me into perfect agonies of distress for the slaves, whose position is utterly hopeless; for myself, whose intervention in their behalf somtimes seems to me worse than useless; for Mr. ——, whose share in this horrible system fills me by turns with indignation and pity. But, after all, what can he do? how can he help it all? Moreover, born and bred in America, how should he care or wish to help it? and, of course, he does not; and I am in despair that he does not: et voilà, it is a happy and hopeful plight for us both. He maintained that there had been neither hardship nor injustice in the case of Teresa's flogging; and that, moreover, she had not been flogged at all for complaining to me, but simply because her allotted task was not done at the appointed time. Of course this was the result of her having come to appeal to me instead of going to her labor; and as she knew perfectly well the penalty she was incurring, he maintained that there was neither hardship nor injustice in the case; the whole thing was a regularly

established law, with which all the slaves were perfectly well acquainted; and this case was no exception whatever. The circumstance of my being on the island could not, of course, be allowed to overthrow the whole system of discipline established to secure the labor and obedience of the slaves; and if they chose to try experiments as to that fact, they and I must take the consequences. At the end of the day, the driver of the gang to which Teresa belongs reported her work not done, and Mr. O—— ordered him to give her the usual number of stripes, which order the driver of course obeyed, without knowing how Teresa had employed her time instead of hoeing. But Mr. O—— knew well enough, for the wretched woman told me that she had herself told him she should appeal to me about her weakness, and suffering, and inability to do the work exacted from her.

He did not, however, think proper to exceed in her punishment the usual number of stripes allotted to the non-performance of the appointed daily task, and Mr. —— pronounced the whole transaction perfectly satisfactory and *en règle*. The common drivers are limited in their powers of chastisement, not being allowed to administer more than a certain number of lashes to their fellow-slaves. Headman Frank, as he is called, has alone the privilege of exceeding this limit; and the overseer's latitude of infliction is only curtailed by the necessity of avoiding injury to life or limb. The master's irresponsible power has no such bound. When I was thus silenced on the particular case under discussion, I resorted, in my distress and indignation, to the abstract question, as I never can refrain from doing; and to Mr. ——'s assertion of the justice of poor Teresa's punishment, I retorted the manifest injustice of unpaid and enforced labor; the brutal inhumanity of allowing a man to strip and lash a woman, the mother of ten children; to exact from her toil which was to maintain in luxury two idle young men, the owners of the plantation. I said I thought female labor of the sort exacted from these slaves, and corporal chastisement such as they endure, must be abhorrent to any manly or humane man. Mr. —— said he thought it was *disagreeable*, and left me to my reflections with that concession. My letter has been interrupted for the last three days—by nothing special, however. My occupations and interests here, of course, know no change; but Mr. —— has been anxious for a little while past that we should go down to St. Simon's, the cotton plantation.

Returning to the house, I passed up the "street." It was between eleven o'clock and noon, and the people were taking their first meal in the day. By-the-by, E——, how do you think Berkshire county farmers would relish laboring hard all day upon *two meals* of Indian corn or hominy? Such is the regulation on this plantation, however, and I beg

you to bear in mind that the negroes on Mr. ——'s estate are generally considered well off. They go to the fields at daybreak, carrying with them their allowance of food for the day, which, toward noon, *and not till then*, they eat, cooking it over a fire, which they kindle as best they can, where they are working. Their second meal in the day is at night, after their labor is over, having worked, at the *very least*, six hours without intermission of rest or refreshment since their noonday meal (properly so called, for 'tis meal, and nothing else). Those that I passed to-day, sitting on their door-steps, or on the ground round them eating, were the people employed at the mill and threshing-floor. As these are near to the settlement, they had time to get their food from the cook-shop. Chairs, tables, plates, knives, forks, they had none; they sat, as I before said, on the earth or door-steps, and ate either out of their little cedar tubs or an iron pot, some few with broken iron spoons, more with pieces of wood, and all the children with their fingers. A more complete sample of savage feeding I never beheld.

"At the upper end of the row of houses, and nearest to our overseer's residence, is the hut of the head driver. Let me explain, by the way, his office. The negroes, as I before told you, are divided into troops or gangs, as they are called; at the head of each gang is a driver, who stands over them, whip in hand, while they perform their daily task, who renders an account of each individual slave and his work every evening to the overseer, and receives from him directions for their next day's tasks. Each driver is allowed to inflict a dozen lashes upon any refractory slave in the field, and at the time of the offence; they may not, however, extend the chastisement, and if it is found ineffectual, their remedy lies in reporting the unmanageable individual either to the head driver or the overseer, the former of whom has power to inflict three dozen lashes at his own discretion, and the latter as many as he himself sees fit, within the number of fifty; which limit, however, I must tell you, is an arbitrary one on this plantation, appointed by the founder of the estate, Major ——, Mr. ——'s grandfather, many of whose regulations, indeed I believe most of them, are still observed in the government of the plantation. Limits of this sort, however, to the power of either driver, head driver, or overseer, may or may not exist elsewhere; they are, to a certain degree, a check upon the power of these individuals; but in the absence of the master, the overseer may confine himself within the limit or not, as he chooses; and as for the master himself, where is his limit? He may, if he likes, flog a slave to death, for the laws which pretend that he may not are a mere pretence, inasmuch as the testimony of a black is never taken against a white; and upon this plantation of ours, and a thousand more, the overseer is the *only* white man, so whence should come the testimony to any crime of his?

With regard to the oft-repeated statement that it is not the owner's interest to destroy his human property, it answers nothing; the instances in which men, to gratify the immediate impulse of passion, sacrifice not only their eternal, but their evident, palpable, positive worldly interest, are infinite. Nothing is commoner than for a man under the transient influence of anger to disregard his worldly advantage; and the black slave, whose preservation is indeed supposed to be his owner's interest, may be, will be, and is occasionally sacrificed to the blind impulse of passion.

In the evening I had a visit from Mr. C—— and Mr. B——, who officiates to-morrow at our small island church. The conversation I had with these gentlemen was sad enough. They seem good, and kind, and amiable men, and I have no doubt are conscientious in their capacity of slaveholders; but to one who has lived outside this dreadful atmosphere, the whole tone of their discourse has a morally muffled sound, which one must hear to be able to conceive. Mr. B—— told me that the people on this plantation not going to church was the result of a positive order from Mr. K——, who had peremptorily forbidden their doing so, and, of course, to have infringed that order would have been to incur severe corporal chastisement. Bishop B——, it seems, had advised that there should be periodical preaching on the plantations, which, said Mr. B——, would have obviated any necessity for the people of different estates congregating at any given point at stated times, which might perhaps be objectionable, and at the same time would meet the reproach which was now beginning to be directed toward Southern planters as a class, of neglecting the eternal interest of their dependents. But Mr. K—— had equally objected to this. He seems to have held religious teaching a mighty dangerous thing—and how right he was! I have met with conventional cowardice of various shades and shapes in various societies that I have lived in, but anything like the pervading timidity of tone which I find here on all subjects, but, above all, on that of the condition of the slaves, I have never dreamed of. Truly slavery begets slavery, and the perpetual state of suspicion and apprehension of the slaveholders is a very handsome offset, to say the least of it, against the fetters and the lash of the slaves. Poor people, one and all, but especially poor oppressors of the oppressed! The attitude of these men is really pitiable; they profess (perhaps some of them strive to do so indeed) to consult the best interests of their slaves, and yet shrink back terrified from the approach of the slightest intellectual or moral improvement which might modify their degraded and miserable existence. I do pity these deplorable servants of two masters more than any human beings I have ever seen—more than their own slaves a thousand times!

I asked him several questions about some of the slaves who had managed

to learn to read, and by what means they had been able to do so. As teaching them is strictly prohibited by the laws, they who instructed them, and such of them as acquired the knowledge, must have been not a little determined and persevering. This was my view of the case, of course, and of course it was not the overseer's. I asked him if many of Mr. ——'s slaves could read. He said, "No; very few, he was happy to say, but those few were just so many too many." "Why, had he observed any insubordination in those who did?" And I reminded him of Cooper London, the Methodist preacher, whose performance of the burial service had struck me so much some time ago, to whose exemplary conduct and character there is but one concurrent testimony all over the plantation. No; he had no special complaint to bring against the lettered members of his subject community, but he spoke by anticipation. Every step they take towards intelligence and enlightenment, lessens the probability of their acquiescing in their condition. Their condition is not to be changed, —ergo, they had better not learn to read; a very succinct and satisfactory argument as far as it goes, no doubt, and one to which I had not a word to reply, at any rate, to Mr. O——, as I did not feel called upon to discuss the abstract justice or equity of the matter with him. Indeed, he, to a certain degree, gave up that part of the position, starting with "I don't say whether it is right or wrong;" and in all conversations that I have had with the Southerners upon these subjects, whether out of civility to what may be supposed to be an Englishwoman's prejudices, or a forlorn respect to their own convictions, the question of the fundamental wrong of Slavery is generally admitted, or at any rate, certainly never denied. That part of the subject is summarily dismissed, and all its other aspects vindicated, excused, and even lauded with untiring eloquence. Of course, of the abstract question I could judge before I came here, but I confess I had not the remotest idea how absolutely my observation of every detail of the system, as a practical iniquity, would go to confirm my opinion of its abomination. Mr. O—— went on to condemn and utterly denounce all the preaching, and teaching, and moral instruction upon religious subjects which people in the South, pressed upon by Northern opinion, are endeavoring to give their slaves. The kinder and the more cowardly masters are anxious to evade the charge of keeping their negroes in brutish ignorance, and so they crumble what they suppose and hope may prove a little harmless religious enlightenment, which, mixed up with much religious authority on the subject of submission and fidelity to masters, they trust their slaves may swallow without its doing them any harm,—*i. e.*, that they may be better Christians and better slaves,—and so, indeed, no doubt they are; but it is a very dangerous experiment, and from Mr. O——'s point of view, I quite agree with him. The letting out of water, or the letting in of light, in infinitesimal quantities, is not always easy. The

half-wicked of the earth are the leaks through which wickedness is eventually swamped; compromises forerun absolute surrender in most matters, and fools and cowards are, in such cases, the instruments of Providence for their own defeat. Mr. O—— stated unequivocally his opinion that free labor would be more profitable on the plantations than the work of slaves, which, being compulsory, was of the worst possible quality and the smallest possible quantity; then the charge of them before and after they are able to work is onerous, the cost of feeding and clothing them very considerable, and upon the whole, he, a Southern overseer, pronounced himself decidedly in favor of free labor, upon grounds of expediency. Having at the beginning of our conversation declined discussing the moral aspect of Slavery, evidently not thinking that position tenable, I thought I had every right to consider Mr. ——'s slave-driver a decided Abolitionist.

After the departure of this poor woman, I walked down the settlement toward the infirmary or hospital, calling in at one or two of the houses along the row. These cabins consist of one room, about twelve feet by fifteen, with a couple of closets smaller and closer than the state-rooms of a ship, divided off from the main room and each other by rough wooden partitions, in which the inhabitants sleep. They have almost all of them a rude bedstead, with the gray moss of the forests for mattress, and filthy, pestilential-looking blankets for covering. Two families (sometimes eight and ten in number) reside in one of these huts, which are mere wooden frames pinned, as it were, to the earth by a brick chimney outside, whose enormous aperture within pours down a flood of air, but little counteracted by the miserable spark of fire, which hardly sends an attenuated thread of lingering smoke up its huge throat., A wide ditch runs immediately at the back of these dwellings, which is filled and emptied daily by the tide. Attached to each hovel is a small scrap of ground for a garden, which, however, is for the most part untended and uncultivated. Such of these dwellings as I visited to-day were filthy and wretched in the extreme, and exhibited that most deplorable consequence of ignorance and an abject condition, the inability of the inhabitants to secure and improve even such pitiful comfort as might yet be achieved by them. Instead of the order, neatness, and ingenuity which might convert even these miserable hovels into tolerable residences, there was the careless, reckless, filthy indolence, which even the brutes do not exhibit in their lairs and nests, and which seemed incapable of applying to the uses of existence the few miserable means of comfort yet within their reach. Firewood and shavings lay littered about the floors, while the half-naked children were cowering round two or three smouldering cinders. The moss, with which the chinks and crannies of their ill-protecting dwellings might have been

stuffed, was trailing in dirt and dust about the ground, while the back door of the huts, opening upon a most unsightly ditch, was left wide open for the fowls and ducks, which they are allowed to raise, to travel in and out, increasing the filth of the cabin by what they brought and left in every direction. In the midst of the floor, or squatting round the cold hearth, would be four or five little children from four to ten years old, the latter all with babies in their arms, the care of the infants being taken from the mothers (who are driven afield as soon as they recover from child labor), and devolved upon these poor little nurses, as they are called, whose business it is to watch the infant, and carry it to its mother whenever it may require nourishment. To these hardly human little beings I addressed my remonstrances about the filth, cold, and unnecessary wretchedness of their room, bidding the elder boys and girls kindle up the fire, sweep the floor, and expel the poultry. For a long time my very words seemed unintelligible to them, till, when I began to sweep and make up the fire, etc., they first fell to laughing, and then imitating me. The incrustations of dirt on their hands, feet, and faces, were my next object of attack, and the stupid negro practice (by-the-by, but a short time since nearly universal in enlightened Europe) of keeping the babies with their feet bare, and their heads, already well capped by nature with their woolly hair, wrapped in half a dozen hot, filthy coverings. Thus I travelled down the "street," in every dwelling endeavoring to awaken a new perception, that of cleanliness, sighing, as I went, over the futility of my own exertions, for how can slaves be improved? Nathless, thought I, let what can be done; for it may be that, the two being incompatible, improvement may yet expel Slavery; and so it might, and surely would, if, instead of beginning at the end, I could but begin at the beginning of my task. If the mind and soul were awakened, instead of mere physical good attempted, the physical good would result, and the great curse vanish away; but my hands are tied fast, and this corner of the work is all that I may do. Yet it can not be but, from my words and actions, some revelations should reach these poor people; and going in and out among them perpetually, I shall teach, and they learn involuntarily a thousand things of deepest import. They must learn, and who can tell the fruit of that knowledge alone, that there are beings in the world, even with skins of a different color from their own, who have sympathy for their misfortunes, love for their virtues, and respect for their common nature—but oh! my heart is full almost to bursting as I walk among these most poor creatures.

The infirmary is a large two-story building, terminating the broad orange-planted space between the two rows of houses which form the first settlement; it is built of whitewashed wood, and contains four large sized rooms. But how shall I describe to you the spectacle which was presented to me on entering the first of these? But half the casements, of

which there were six, were glazed, and these were obscured with dirt, almost as much as the other windowless ones were darkened by the dingy shutters, which the shivering inmates had fastened to in order to protect themselves from the cold. In the enormous chimney glimmered the powerless embers of a few sticks of wood, round which, however, as many of the sick women as could approach were cowering, some on wooden settles, most of them on the ground, excluding those who were too ill to rise; and these last poor wretches lay prostrate on the floor, without bed, mattress, or pillow, buried in tattered and filthy blankets, which, huddled round them as they lay strewed about, left hardly space to move upon the floor. And here, in their hour of sickness and suffering, lay those whose health and strength are spent in unrequited labor for us—those who, perhaps even yesterday, were being urged on to their unpaid task—those whose husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons were even at that hour sweating over the earth, whose produce was to buy for us all the luxuries which health can revel in, all the comforts which can alleviate sickness. I stood in the midst of them, perfectly unable to speak, the tears pouring from my eyes at this sad spectacle of their misery, myself and my emotion alike strange and incomprehensible to them. Here lay women expecting every hour the terrors and agonies of childbirth, others who had just brought their doomed offspring into the world, others who were groaning over the anguish and bitter disappointment of miscarriages—here lay some burning with fever, others chilled with cold and aching with rheumatism, upon the hard cold ground, the draughts and dampness of the atmosphere increasing their sufferings, and dirt, noise, and stench, and every aggravation of which sickness is capable, combined in their condition—here they lay like brute beasts, absorbed in physical suffering; unvisited by any of those Divine influences which may ennoble the dispensations of pain and illness, forsaken, as it seemed to me, of all good; and yet, O God, Thou surely hadst not forsaken them! Now pray take notice that this is the hospital of an estate where the owners are supposed to be humane, the overseer efficient and kind, and the negroes remarkably well cared for and comfortable. As soon as I recovered from my dismay, I addressed old Rose the midwife, who had charge of this room, bidding her open the shutters of such windows as were glazed, and let in the light. I next proceeded to make up the fire; but, upon my lifting a log for that purpose, there was one universal outcry of horror, and old Rose, attempting to snatch it from me, exclaimed, "Let alone, missis—let be; what for you lift wood? you have nigger enough, missis, to do it!" I hereupon had to explain to them my view of the purposes for which hands and arms were appended to our bodies, and forthwith began making Rose tidy up the miserable apartment, removing all the filth and rubbish from the floor that could be removed, folding up in piles the blankets of

the patients who were not using them, and placing, in rather more sheltered and comfortable positions, those who were unable to rise. It was all that I could do, and having enforced upon them all my earnest desire that they should keep their room swept, and as tidy as possible, I passed on to the other room on the ground floor, and to the two above, one of which is appropriated to the use of the men who are ill. They were all in the same deplorable condition, the upper rooms being rather the more miserable, inasmuch as none of the windows were glazed at all, and they had, therefore, only the alternative of utter darkness, or killing draughts of air from the unsheltered casements. In all, filth, disorder, and misery abounded, the floor was the only bed, and scanty begrimed rags of blankets the only covering. I left this refuge for Mr. ——'s sick dependents with my clothes covered with dust, and full of vermin, and with a heart heavy enough, as you will well believe. My morning's work had fatigued me not a little, and I was glad to return to the house, where I gave vent to my indignation and regret at the scene I had just witnessed to Mr. —— and his overseer, who, here, is a member of our family. The latter told me that the condition of the hospital had appeared to him, from his first entering upon his situation (only within the last year), to require a reform, and that he had proposed it to the former manager, Mr. K——, and Mr. ——'s brother, who is part proprietor of the estate, but, receiving no encouragement from them, had supposed that it was a matter of indifference to the owners, and had left it in the condition in which he had found it, in which condition it has been for the last nineteen years and upward.

I have been interrupted by several visits, my dear E——, among other, one from a poor creature called Judy, whose sad story and condition affected me most painfully. She had been married, she said, some years ago to one of the men called Temba, who, however, now has another wife, having left her because she went mad. While out of her mind she escaped into the jungle, and contrived to secrete herself there for some time, but was finally tracked and caught, and brought back and punished by being made to sit, day after day, for hours in the stocks,—a severe punishment for a man, but for a woman perfectly barbarous. She complained of chronic rheumatism, and other terrible ailments, and said she suffered such intolerable pain while laboring in the fields, that she had come to entreat me to have her work lightened. She could hardly crawl, and cried bitterly all the time she spoke to me.

She told me a miserable story of her former experience on the plantation under Mr. K——'s overseership. It seems that Jem Valiant (an extremely difficult subject, a mulatto lad, whose valor is sufficiently accounted for now by the influence of the mutinous white blood) was her

first-born, the son of Mr. K——, who forced her, flogged her severely for having resisted him, and then sent her off, as a farther punishment, to Five Pound—a horrible swamp in a remote corner of the estate, to which the slaves are sometimes banished for such offences as are not sufficiently atoned for by the lash. The dismal loneliness of the place to these poor people, who are as dependent as children upon companionship and sympathy, makes this solitary exile a much-dreaded infliction; and this poor creature said that, bad as the flogging was, she would sooner have taken that again than the dreadful lonely days and nights she spent on the penal swamp of Five Pound.

I make no comment on these terrible stories, my dear friend, and tell them to you as nearly as possible in the perfectly plain, unvarnished manner in which they are told to me. I do not wish to add to, or perhaps I ought to say take away from, the effect of such narrations by amplifying the simple horror and misery of their bare details.

Another of my visitors had a still more dismal story to tell; her name was Die; she had had sixteen children, fourteen of whom were dead; she had had four miscarriages: one had been caused with falling down with a very heavy burden on her head, and one from having her arms strained up to be lashed. I asked her what she meant by having her arms tied up. She said their hands were first tied together, sometimes by the wrists, and sometimes, which was worse, by the thumbs, and they were then drawn up to a tree or post, so as almost to swing them off the ground, and then their clothes rolled round their waist, and a man with a cowhide stands and stripes them. I give you the woman's words. She did not speak of this as of anything strange, unusual or especially horrid and abominable; and when I said, "Did they do that to you when you were with child?" she simply replied, "Yes, missis." And to all this I listen—I, an Englishwoman, the wife of the man who owns these wretches, and I cannot say, "This thing shall not be done again; that cruel shame and villainy shall never be known here again." I gave the woman meat and flannel, which were what she came to ask for, and remained choking with indignation and grief long after they had all left me to my most bitter thoughts.

I went out to try and walk off some of the weight of horror and depression which I am beginning to feel daily more and more, surrounded by all this misery and degradation that I can neither help nor hinder.